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UNITED STATES
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Soil Conservation Service

Appraising Time Distribution

Use of time is a primary factor affecting progress of conservation work at all work locations. Area conservationists with the help of state operations management leaders need to make frequent analyses of work done for the time used.

The charts on the following pages illustrate a graphic method of reviewing time distribution for, or with individual employees and work unit staffs, as the needs arise. Simple charts of this sort may be plotted in field offices from the SCS-501's and 501a's. Some factors shown are as follows:

Use of time by months and seasons - Charts clearly reveal peak periods when time was spent for various activities. This provides an effective means of evaluating time distribution and activities by months and seasons.

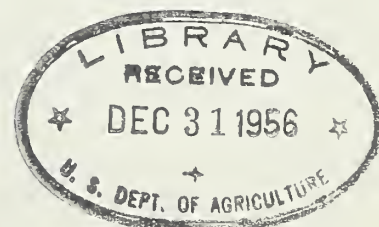
Guides to proper use of time - When work is done out of season the time input rates are usually higher. The charts show whether time was properly apportioned in respect to planting seasons, harvest seasons, layout periods, farm planning periods, and others of local concern.

Relation of expected use, to actual use - Charts may be used to relate time spent on various activities with the expected use that was shown in SCS plans of work and schedules.

Operations activities vs. facilitating tasks - Charts clearly show the competitive nature of activities for use of available time during any month or season. Improved schedules and handling of facilitating tasks are needed at many locations to release more time for field operations.

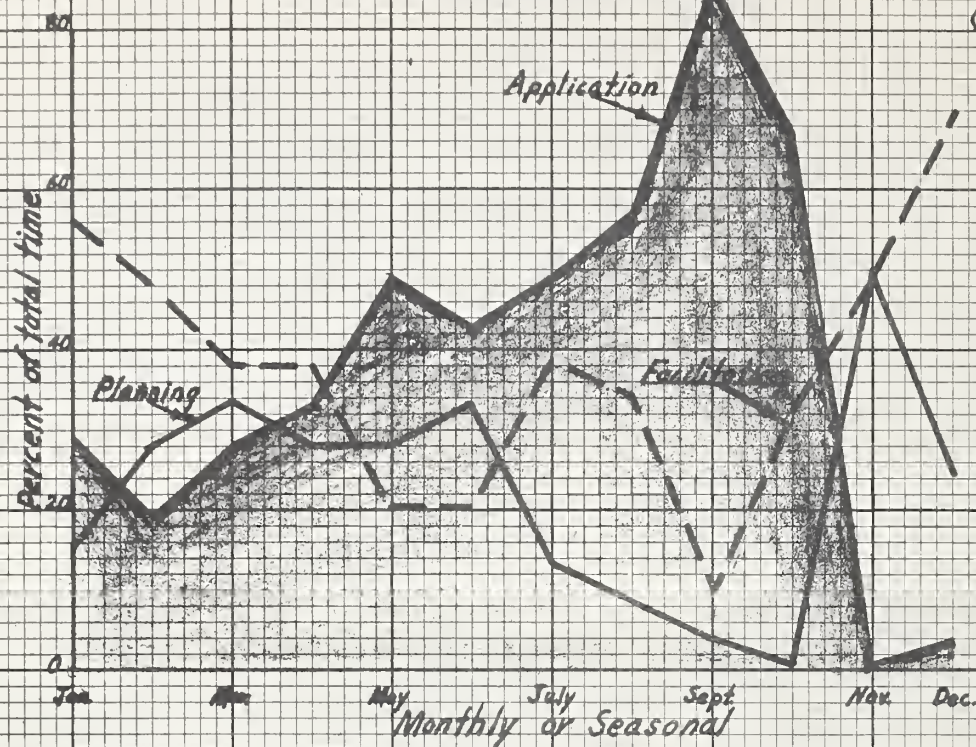
The following charts illustrate an analysis tool shown in Section VII, page 22, of the National Records and Reports Handbook. Visual presentation of data will aid OM leaders, area conservationists and others in effectively using the findings of such analyses. A graphic picture of their own use of time can be very impressive to work unit personnel and aid them in better scheduling their work.

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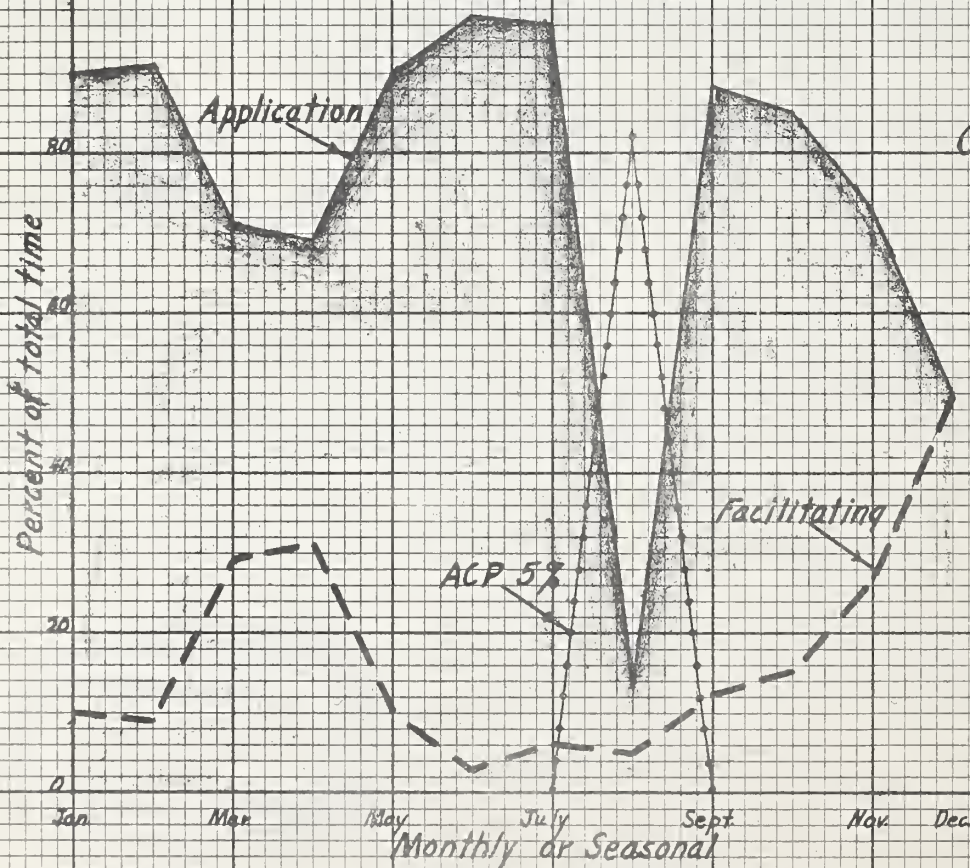
1955 TIME DISTRIBUTION Work Unit Conservationist

Chart I



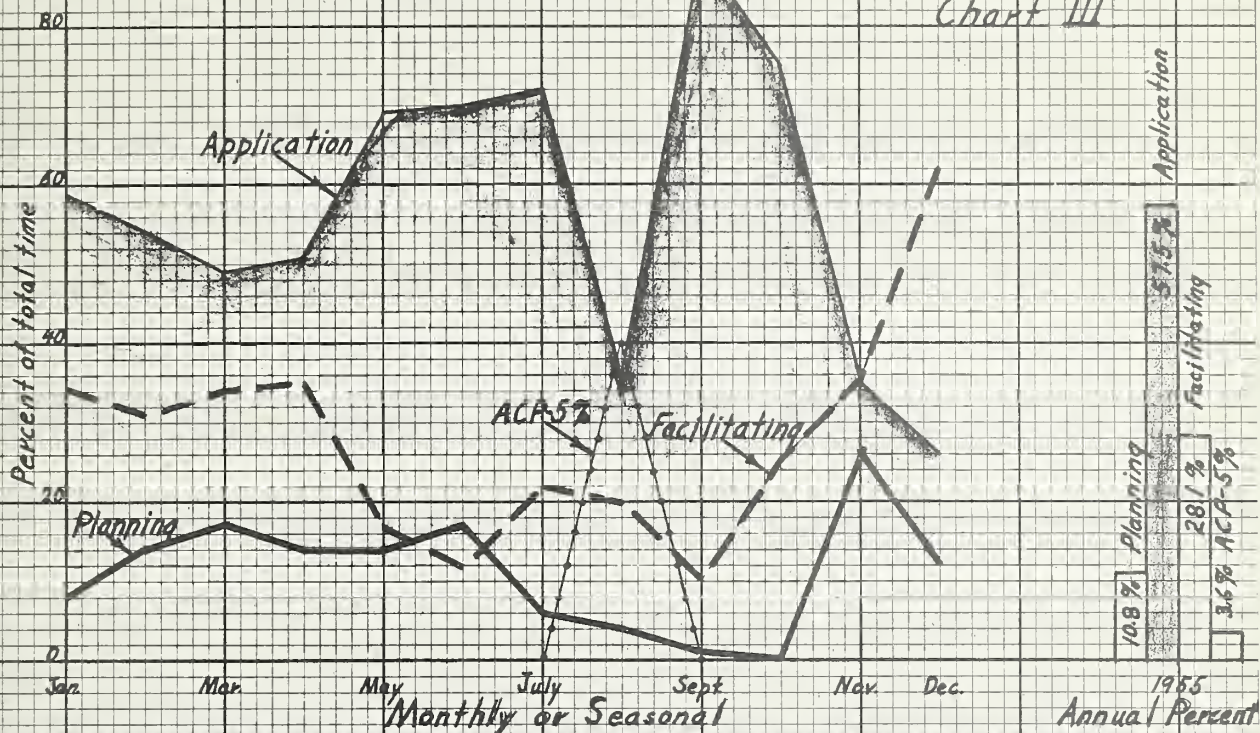
Conservation Aide

Chart II



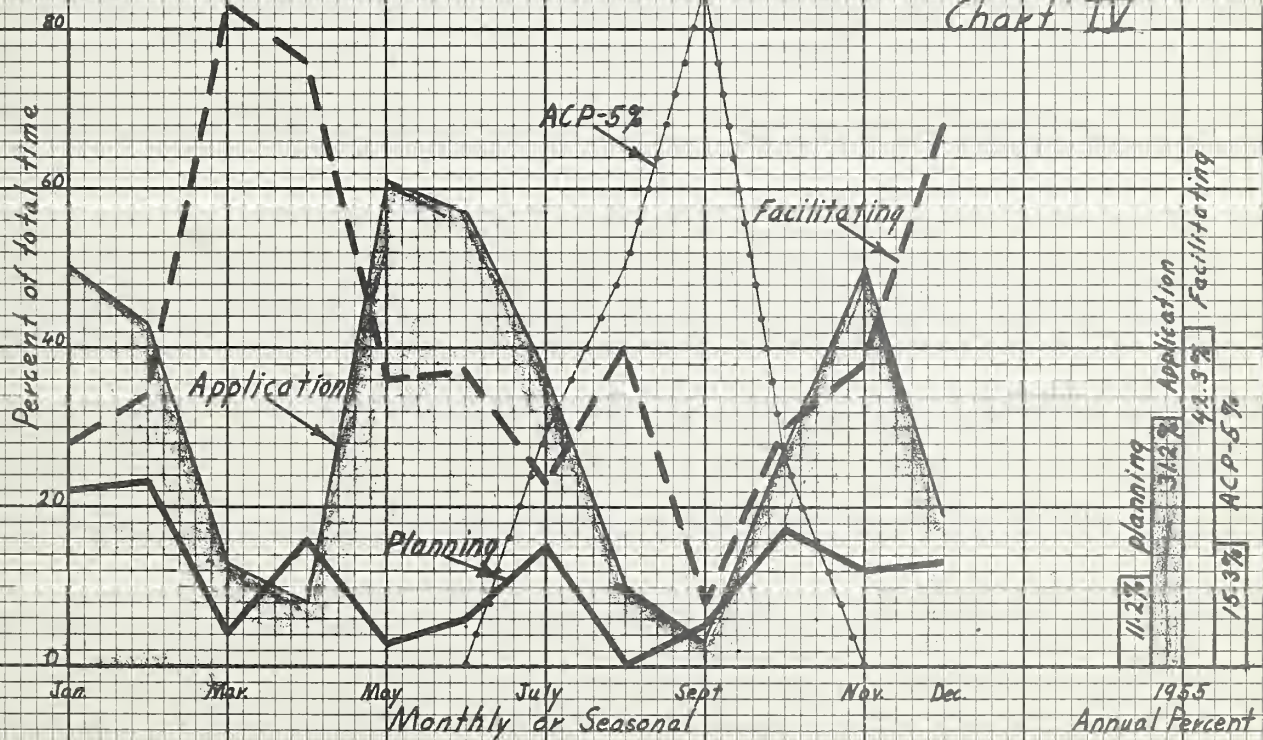
Work Unit A

Chart III



Work Unit B

Chart IV



SUMMARY

The time distribution charts on the preceding pages were plotted from the monthly time records of two work units located in the same problem area. Some of the points shown are as follows:

Chart I - Work Unit Conservationist - Definite patterns of time distribution by seasons and activities are clearly indicated. For instance, planning was done chiefly in the first six months and again late in the year. The peak period for application work was in August, September, and October. This work unit conservationist did not record any time on ACP work, which was handled by the aide.

Chart II - Conservation Aide - Except for August and December this conservation aide used his available time predominantly for application work. No planning time was indicated and ACP-5% time was used only one month. Note the direct offsetting of application time and facilitating tasks.

Chart III - Work Unit "A" - Includes the combined time of the work unit conservationist and conservation aide shown in Charts I and II. The seasonal use of time by the staff is reflected in this chart, where considerable leave was taken in December.

Chart IV - Work Unit "B" - Indicates wide variations in monthly use of time for similar activities in Work Unit "B". Since they are in the same problem area, more similarity of the charts for Work Units "A" and "B" might be expected on seasonal basis. Planning time varied widely from month to month.

The bars at right of the charts show the percentages in the use of time for the year, which were not the same as for any single month. This shows the importance of evaluating time distribution and activities by months and seasons, rather than have time for each month adhere to some arbitrary annual average.

All of the charts show that when the percentage of facilitating time increased, there was a corresponding decrease in time available for planning, or application, or both.

Obviously, charts of this sort are an effective means of studying the use of time, but the charts themselves are only a means to an end. The analysis should follow a sequence of steps leading to an appraisal of the work done so that personnel will more effectively plan and schedule their work. Such presentations may be changed or adapted to meet local conditions.

